

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

FOREST TRAILS AND LANDINGS

(Acre)

CODE 655

DEFINITION

A temporary or infrequently used route, path or cleared area within a forest.

PURPOSE

- Provide infrequent access to forest stands for management activities including fire suppression.
- Provide periodic access for removal and collection of forest products.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

Trails and landings are applicable on forested areas. Refer to the standard Access Roads, 560, for travel-ways that will be designed and used frequently or repeatedly for vehicular traffic.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable To All Purposes

Trails and landings will be of a size, gradient, number and location to accomplish the intended purpose.

They shall be located to minimize adverse onsite and off-site impacts such as accelerated erosion, riparian area degradation, stream channel and streambank damage, hydrology modification, aesthetics or unacceptable damage to advance regeneration, residual growing stock or wildlife habitat.

Timing and use of equipment will be commensurate with site and soil conditions to maintain site productivity and minimize soil erosion, displacement and compaction.

Slash, debris and vegetative material left on the site after use will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose.

Drainage and erosion control measures for trails shall be used and located to minimize water flows and erosion rates to acceptable levels. [Follow guidelines in *Acceptable Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs in Vermont \(AMPs\)*.](#)

Trails and landings shall be revegetated to control erosion as needed. Refer to the standard Critical Area Planting, 342. Locally invasive and noxious plants will not be used for revegetation.

Measures, including the use and treatment of equipment, will be used to control or protect against locally invasive species. If pesticides are used, refer to the Standard Pest Management, 595.

CONSIDERATIONS

Assure safe ingress and egress to site.

Locate landings and trails to preserve aesthetic qualities.

Landings and trails may be used for wildlife food and cover plantings.

Favor native species for revegetating trails and landings.

Landings and trails may be utilized as firebreaks.

Consider cultural resources and environmental concerns such as threatened and endangered species of plants and animals, natural areas and wetlands.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service [State Office](#) or visit the [electronic Field Office Technical Guide](#).

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using [the approved VT NRCS 655 job sheet](#).

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Periodic inspections of landings and trails will be conducted and maintained as necessary.

Landings and trails utilized as firebreaks will be properly maintained to accomplish this purpose.

Landings and trails shall be closed when and where needed for erosion control, safety and liability, and reduced maintenance costs. Refer to the standard Use Exclusion, 472.

Landings and trails no longer needed, and not used as a firebreak, can be retired. They shall be sufficiently revegetated as needed.